BUDGET 2006

Ministry of
Children and Family
Development

2006/07 – 2008/09
SERVICE PLAN

BRITISH
COLUMBIA

www.gov.bc.ca

National Library of Canada Cataloguing in Publication Data
British Columbia. Ministry of Children and Family Development.
Ministry of Children and Family Development service plan. —
2002/03/2004/05 –

Annual.
Issued also in electronic version.
Continues: British Columbia. Ministry for Children and Families. Performance plan.
ISSN 1703-9126 = Ministry of Children and Family Development service plan (Print)

1. British Columbia. Ministry of Children and Family Development – Periodicals. 2. Children – Services for – British Columbia – Periodicals. 3. Child welfare – Government policy – British Columbia – Periodicals.
4. Family services – British Columbia – Periodicals.
I. Title. II. Title: Core services review: Ministry of Children and Family Development service plan.

HV745.B7B74 353.53'31'0971105 C2002-960217-3

For more information on the British Columbia Ministry of Children and Family Development, contact:

Client Relations Branch
Ministry of Children and Family Development
PO BOX 9770
STN PROV GOVT
VICTORIA, BC
V8W 9S5

or visit our website at
http://www.gov.bc.ca/mcf

Published by the Ministry of Children and Family Development

Message from the Minister and Accountability Statement

It is my privilege to present the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) 2006/07 - 2008/09 Service Plan. This plan outlines how the ministry will support government in achieving its Five Great Goals for a Golden Decade.

Strong partnerships and collaborative relationships with other ministries, stakeholders and community partners are corner-stones of how the ministry will assist in supporting government's Five Great Goals. The ministry's support is focused on the first three Great Goals which emphasize literacy, healthy living and physical fitness, and support for vulnerable children, youth and adults. Where possible the ministry also supports Great Goals 4 and 5 — sustainable environmental management and the creation of jobs — through its programs and initiatives.

My first priority is the health and safety of children and youth in B.C. We provide a wide range of supports and services to keep children safe and to strengthen and assist families. I am confident that our child welfare system is one of the finest in the world, and that staff, through their professionalism and dedication, are ensuring all necessary steps are being taken to protect children. It is critical to our success that the ministry has effective and responsive approaches to build and support the capacity of families. The regular review of our practices, combined with the implementation of practices that are informed by current research, is a necessary and important part of providing the best services possible. I believe the recommendations from the reviews that are currently underway will assist us in improving the services provided to children and their families in this province.

Reflecting government's new relationship with Aboriginal people, the ministry works with Aboriginal leaders to address issues relating to the safety and well-being of Aboriginal children and families. Children are the heart of the Aboriginal community and the ministry is committed to improving services to better meet the needs of Aboriginal people. Working in partnership with other ministries will enhance our ability to positively impact the lives of Aboriginal citizens. Our ministry is working with Aboriginal communities to enhance the capacity for service delivery and to develop regional Aboriginal child and family development regional authorities to give greater community control over Aboriginal child and family services. The ministry also plans to proceed with establishing regional non-Aboriginal child and family development authorities.

The Ministry of Children and Family Development, working with our partners, including the Ministries of Health and Education, is committed to building an integrated system of programs and services to increase the capacity of families and communities and to provide the best possible environment in which to raise a child. The ministry supports initiatives and programs for children with special needs, for youth who are at risk, and for child and youth mental health. Actively participating in the development of the StrongStartBC strategy provides MCFD with opportunities to realize improved outcomes for British Columbia's children, youth and their families. Coordinated efforts with other ministries and community

organizations will assist in meeting Great Goal 3 — building the best system of support in Canada for persons with disabilities, those with special needs, children at risk, and seniors.

The ministry will continue to support and make improvements to strategies and initiatives for young children, and their families, that promote early childhood development, including child care, early intervention and services for children with special needs. Working with the Ministry of Education, we will continue to strengthen linkages between and among early learning, child care and early childhood development initiatives to improve school readiness and school performance, helping to realize Great Goal 1 — to make B.C. the best-educated, most literate jurisdiction on the continent. The ministry contributes to Great Goal 2 — to lead the way in North America in healthy living and physical fitness — through initiatives in our child care centres and initiatives targeted for vulnerable children.

Our province continues to be a leader in developing community-based services for individuals with developmental disabilities, as evidenced by the creation of Community Living British Columbia (CLBC), the Crown agency responsible for providing services for persons with developmental disabilities.[1] I support CLBC's vision for the future that will lead to service improvements, and will enable individuals with developmental disabilities to more fully participate in and contribute to their communities. As Minister Responsible, I will work with CLBC to meet its objectives and ensure its accountability.

We will continue the implementation of the multi-year Child and Youth Mental Health Plan across the province. The first two years focussed on making the existing services effective and efficient. Resource enhancements to children's mental health services are underway to reduce the gap between need and capacity. The ministry will continue to improve B.C.'s mental health service system in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and community partners.

I have set challenging performance targets in our service plan to guide the ministry's efforts to move toward the desired results. For all of the ministry's services, ongoing monitoring assists with determining that needs are being met in an effective and efficient manner and that the service delivery system is sustainable.

The Ministry of Children and Family Development 2006/07 - 2008/09 Service Plan was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*. I am accountable for the basis on which the plan has been prepared. All material fiscal assumptions and policy decisions as of February 8, 2006 have been considered in preparing the plan and I am accountable for achieving the specific objectives in the plan.

Honourable Stanley B. Hagen
Minister of Children and Family Development and Minister Responsible for CLBC

February 8, 2006

[1] For further information see CLBC's service plan at: http://www.communitylivingbc.ca.

Message from the Minister of State for Child Care and Accountability Statement

Government recognizes the important role that quality child care plays in ensuring long term positive outcomes for children. B.C.'s children are our future and it is my privilege to be the Minister of State for Child Care. In partnership with other ministries, we aim to give children the strongest start possible by increasing supports available for child care, early childhood development and early learning programs. Working with the other child-serving ministries, we are developing a holistic approach for early learning and child care that will give B.C. children the strongest start possible in life.

Quality child care, together with early learning and child care initiatives, contribute to improved child development and increased readiness to learn, key factors that support one of government's Five Great Goals for a Golden Decade — to make B.C. the best-educated, most literate jurisdiction on the continent. The establishment of a baseline for school readiness of kindergarten-aged children in British Columbia — seventy-five per cent of all school children in B.C. enter school ready to learn — provides the information necessary to track performance in this area. The school readiness performance measure is a key measure for all partnering ministries and it will assist future planning and priority setting to improve outcomes for children.

To inform the development of early learning and child care policies, government consulted extensively with a number of stakeholders regarding priorities. Government is committed to enhancing availability, quality and choice around early learning and child care. Targeted investments to low-income families and families with children with special needs will promote better access for more parents to quality child care.

We aim to build the best system of support for children with special needs, including children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD). In making strategic investments in supports for families we are moving towards meeting government's Great Goals that emphasize healthy living and supports for vulnerable children.

Research confirms that collaborative planning and community-based integrated service delivery will serve communities well and maximize positive, effective results for children and their families. Innovative research tools, such as the B.C. Atlas of Child Development,[2] which demonstrates the relationship between child vulnerability patterns and socio-economic conditions, will help government to work with communities and policy makers to develop strategic approaches to healthy child development in the province.

[2] http://ecdportal.help.ubc.ca/bc-atlas-child-development.htm.

I am confident that families, communities, organizations and government working together can ensure that our young children — our youngest citizens — have every opportunity to thrive.

I am the Minister of State for Child Care and under the *Balanced Budget and Ministerial Accountability Act*, I am accountable for achieving the following results for 2006/07:

- In consultation with the Ministries of Education and Health, provide leadership to establish/expand five neighbourhood service hubs that offer a range of integrated services for families, including child care, and inform the Provincial Child Care Council and other interested parties regarding the results.
- Establish three new community partnerships that focus on child care, target specific communities and model best practices, and report results to the Government Caucus Committee (GCC) on Social Development.
- Host a Family Friendly Workplace Forum.
- Present a plan developed in collaboration with the Ministers of Advanced Education and Health to increase the number of skilled and qualified behavioural interventionists for children with autism in B.C. to the GCC on Social Development.
- Work with the Ministry of Advanced Education on the development of a recruitment and retention plan for Early Childhood Educators, which includes an Aboriginal focus, and present the plan to the GCC on Social Development.

Honourable Linda Reid
Minister of State for Child Care

February 8, 2006

Table of Contents

Ministry Overview 7
Purpose of Ministry 7
Vision, Mission and Values 8

Strategic Context 9

Core Business Areas 14

Resource Summary 16

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Results 19
Overview 19
Ministry Goals 19
Linkage to the Five Great Goals 19
Cross Ministry Initiatives 20
Performance Plan 21
Ministry Performance Plan Summary 38

Related Initiatives and Planning Processes 40

Appendices 41

106-02983/

Ministry Overview

Purpose of Ministry

The Ministry of Children and Family Development works to ensure that the province's children and families have the strongest start possible to thrive and succeed. The ministry is responsible for regionally and provincially delivered services and programs.

Currently, the ministry is organized into the following five child and family development service delivery regions: Northern; Interior; Fraser; Vancouver Coastal; and Vancouver Island. The ministry's responsibilities include: child protection; residential and foster care; adoption for children permanently in care; family development; community child and youth mental health; community youth justice services; programs to assist at-risk or sexually exploited youth; early childhood development; child care; and services for children and youth with special needs and their families. In addition, the ministry is responsible for specialized provincial services including managing the operations for youth custody centres, youth forensic psychiatric services, Maples Adolescent Treatment Centre, services for the deaf and hard of hearing, and migrant services.

The ministry directly delivers services, and also contracts with service providers to work in partnership to deliver the ministry's complex array of services. Approximately 60 per cent of MCFD's funding supports contracts with community-based service delivery agencies. The continued use of best practices by staff and service providers will help to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and quality of services. The ministry's service delivery partners include contracted community service providers, other ministries, family foster homes, Aboriginal communities, delegated Aboriginal child welfare agencies, school districts and health authorities. The ministry continues to refine the way business is done by strengthening and redefining relationships with the individuals served, families and service providers to create sustainable service delivery systems that are flexible, innovative and accountable.

The ministry's legislative mandate includes the *Child, Family and Community Service Act*, the *Adoption Act*, the *Youth Justice Act*, the *Child Care BC Act* and the *Child Care Subsidy Act*.[3]

[3] For a complete list of the acts the ministry is responsible for please see: http://www.legis.gov.bc.ca/PROCS/allacts/cfd.HTM.

Vision, Mission and Values

Vision

The Ministry of Children and Family Development envisions a province where children are healthy, families are responsible and all live in safe, caring and inclusive communities.

Mission

To promote and develop the capacity of families and communities to care for and protect vulnerable children and youth, and to maximize the potential of every child in B.C. by supporting healthy child development.

Values

As an organization the Ministry of Children and Family Development values:

- **Service Excellence:** Providing and supporting the delivery of quality, effective, evidence-based services that strive for the optimal use of resources.
- **Partnerships with Aboriginal Peoples:** Transforming relationships to work with Aboriginal communities to develop, implement and deliver services for Aboriginal children and families.
- **Dynamic Organizational Culture:** Focusing on accountability, innovation and excellence.

The following values guide the planning and delivery of ministry services:

- **Protection of Vulnerable Children and Youth:** Ensuring the safety and well-being of vulnerable children and youth is the paramount consideration.
- **Primacy of Family:** Supporting the right and primary responsibility of families to protect and support the growth and development of children while providing the least intrusive measures to keep children safely within their families when possible.
- **Integrity:** Promoting relationships of mutual trust, confidence and respect.
- **Participation:** Involving children, youth, their families and communities in the planning and delivery of services.
- **Fostering Community Capacity:** Recognizing and supporting communities so they can enhance the resilience of children and families.

Strategic Context

The Ministry of Children and Family Development serves a wide range of clients in all of our communities, including some of the most vulnerable people in British Columbia. Our mandate is to advance the safety and well-being of children and youth; to advance early childhood development; and to support a sustainable, flexible, community-based system of family services that promotes innovation, equity and accountability.

The following section highlights key opportunities and challenges that will affect the ministry over the next three years. Specific goals, objectives and targets are discussed in the Performance Plan section of this service plan.

Key Opportunities

New Relationship with First Nations

The B.C. government has made a commitment to build a new relationship with First Nations people and is leading change that has the potential to reshape our social and economic landscape and create a more inclusive and prosperous future. Work is underway — at both the provincial and federal levels — to strengthen and revitalize First Nations communities and to address longstanding issues in areas such as housing, health and early childhood development.

This renewed commitment will create opportunities to strengthen partnerships between the ministry and Aboriginal organizations, including delegated Aboriginal child welfare agencies and the development of new Aboriginal child and youth mental health services. It also has potential to reduce, over time, the numbers of Aboriginal children, youth and families who need ministry supports and services, as Aboriginal communities gain capacity and resiliency, and are provided an opportunity — through regional Aboriginal child and family development authorities — to take greater responsibility for MCFD services and improve overall outcomes. Work is proceeding on the creation of five regional Aboriginal child and family development authorities for delivery of services and the ministry is committed to realizing this new service delivery structure.

The ministry works in partnership with a number of Aboriginal organizations to develop and deliver culturally appropriate services to Aboriginal children and families, including Aboriginal child care organizations, and the delegated Aboriginal child welfare agencies whose services include responsibility for approximately one third of Aboriginal children-in-care. The development of delegated Aboriginal agencies is on track and work is underway to strengthen many Aboriginal organizations in the province.

Community Governance

The ministry is also intending to proceed with the creation of regional non-Aboriginal child and family development community authorities to enhance its connection to community, and to promote community-based accountability and decision making.

Early Learning and Child Care Bilateral Agreement-in-Principle

In September 2005, British Columbia signed the Early Learning and Child Care Bilateral Agreement-in-Principle with the federal government, providing the framework for an integrated early learning and child care system where children and families benefit from increased quality, more developmental programs, and greater early learning and child care opportunities. The federal government agreed to honour the first two years (2005/06 and 2006/07) of the five-year agreement. Until further details are made available, the initial committment to B.C. made by the previous federal government will continue to be included as part of funding for children's services.

The ministry will work to improve school readiness, helping children be "ready to learn" so that they may experience optimum school performance. Leading research from the Human Early Learning Partnership,[4] through the B.C. Atlas of Child Development,[5] combines data that identifies more than 1,000 socio-economic variables that relate to neighbourhood vulnerability patterns among kindergarten children that will inform government and community planning. MCFD will collaborate with community partners and other provincial child-serving ministries, particularly the Ministry of Education. Consultations began in the fall of 2005 to identify priorities and leverage the agreement-in-principle to support a comprehensive, integrated, government-wide early years strategy.

This work is expected to have a far-reaching impact on British Columbia's children, families and communities because it supports children's optimal development from birth up to the age of six. Experiences in these early years have a profound and life-long impact on health, well-being, brain development, learning and future achievement. Therefore, investments in programs and services supporting healthy early development have the potential to deliver benefits for generations to come.

Greater Flexibility in Keeping Children Safe

In recent years, the ministry has developed a range of options to protect and care for at-risk children in their families and communities, rather than in foster care. Families and communities are also increasingly involved in decisions about children's care, through such approaches as family group conferencing, mediation, kinship agreements and independent living arrangements for youth.

[4] http://www.earlylearning.ubc.ca/.

[5] http://ecdportal.help.ubc.ca/bc-atlas-child-development.htm.

These more flexible approaches have supported a decline in the number of children-in-care from 10,755 in June 2001 to 9,041 in September 2005. In coming years, these approaches will increase family engagement in planning and decision-making for their children, which will ensure the most appropriate care is provided, while reducing the number of children unnecessarily entering and/or remaining in care.

At the time of publication the ministry was beginning to receive feedback from a number of external reviews concerning child welfare practices. These reviews will provide guidance to the ministry to strengthen current strategies, develop and implement new strategies and improve quality assurance processes related to child welfare practices in B.C. Current improvements include: implementing a common audit tool — a tool for the review of specific practices — for delegated Aboriginal agencies; continuing systems development on tools that will improve the tracking of fatalities and critical incidents, as well as recommendation-tracking and online case audit tools.

Child and Youth Mental Health Plan

Mental illnesses constitute the most significant group of health problems for children and youth, surpassing all others in terms of the numbers affected and degrees of impairment caused. Mental illnesses affect about 15 per cent of children and youth, compromising their functioning at home, at school, with peers and in the community.

The ministry is leading the implementation of the B.C. Child and Youth Mental Health Plan in partnership with families and communities, and other ministries. The Plan will provide new opportunities to coordinate services, enhance treatment and support, reduce risk and build family and community capacity to care for children and youth with mental illnesses.

A Strong Provincial Economy

Since 2004, British Columbia has emerged as a national leader in economic growth. B.C. also has the strongest job growth in Canada, with over 250,000 new jobs — most of them full-time positions — created between December 2001 and October 2005. The Economic Forecast Council expects strong growth and job creation to continue for at least the next two years.

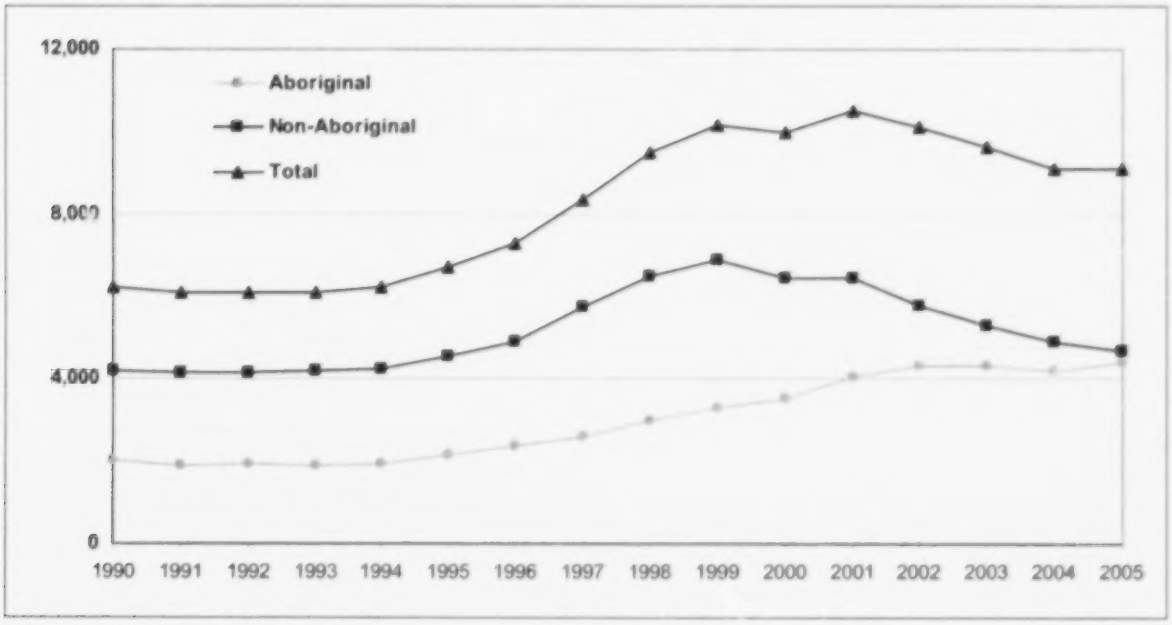
Key Challenges

Demographic Changes

In British Columbia, there are approximately 901,000 children and youth under age 19, representing 20 per cent of the province's total population. An estimated 577,320 are children under age 13, including 245,556 children under age six. After almost a decade of year-over-year declines, British Columbia's child population (under age six) is forecast to grow again beginning in 2006/07. This may increase the need for ministry services. With a strong economy and lower unemployment, the number of parents entering the workforce is also rising, increasing the need for access to quality child care throughout B.C.

The proportion of the child population which is Aboriginal is expected to continue to grow. Consequently, the needs for programs and services to serve these children and families will increase. Although work is underway to address the key systemic issues undermining the health of Aboriginal communities, Aboriginal children continue to be over-represented among those served by the ministry. Aboriginal children account for approximately nine per cent of the child population, but make up 49 per cent of children-in-care (Chart 1) and 42 per cent of youth in custody.

Chart 1: B.C. Children-in-Care Trends (1990 – 2005)



Child Welfare

The challenges related to the provision of child welfare services are not always within the control of the ministry. Societal factors can affect the conditions under which children are raised and the ministry endeavours to anticipate and respond to upcoming trends, as well as current realities that impact the children of British Columbia.

With an increased reliance on out-of-care options for children with less complex needs, there is a growing trend toward the placement of children and youth with increasingly more complex needs in foster homes. This puts pressure on the foster care system and may create challenges in areas such as foster family recruitment and retention.

A Growing Population of Children and Youth with Special Needs

A growing proportion of British Columbia's children and youth have some kind of identified special need. It is estimated that there are approximately 52,000 children and youth with special needs in British Columbia and the ministry currently serves approximately 16,000 of these children and youth. Over the last 25 years, there has been a 70-fold increase in the survival rate of low birth weight infants. As many as 80 per cent of low birth weight infants have some form of disability. Recent improvements in screening, diagnosis and assessment have helped to identify more children with special needs, including children with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

These trends, coupled with increased public awareness of special needs, will likely contribute to increased demand for ministry services in this area, including specialized supports to enhance or improve children's health, development or participation in daily activities at home, in school and in their communities.

Workforce Challenges

The ministry is well served by a very committed and professional workforce. An aging workforce and increasing competition for talent creates challenges for ministries and government in retaining and recruiting the workforce needed to deliver on government's goals and objectives. It is particularly challenging to recruit professional staff in rural areas of B.C. The ministry is addressing these challenges through activities such as succession planning initiatives and strategies targeted at key professional positions, as well as endeavouring to create a workforce that is ethically and culturally reflective of the community they serve.

Internal Capacity

The ministry is working to enhance its own internal management practices. This includes improving accountability of contracted services through performance-based contracts and accreditation for service providers; implementing a client and contract management system to better support informed decision-making and accountability; and continuing to emphasize project management and research-based approaches in service planning and delivery. Specific strategies for achieving ministry goals and objectives are discussed in the Performance Plan section of this service plan.

Core Business Areas

Ministry Operations

The ministry relies on its four core business areas to implement its strategic direction and achieve its goals and objectives.

1. Child and Family Development

This core business area provides a range of services for children, youth and their families to maintain and improve the safety and well-being of vulnerable children and youth in B.C. It includes: child protection; residential; guardianship; foster care; permanency and adoption planning for children permanently in care; and services to strengthen and preserve families. It also includes community child and youth mental health services; community youth justice supervision services; and services to assist youth who are at-risk or who are sexually exploited.
[2006/07: Budget: $627,337,000 and 2,939 FTEs]

2. Early Childhood Development, Child Care and Supports to Children with Special Needs

This core business area is responsible for early childhood development, child care services and services for children and youth with special needs and their families. The goal of these services is to support children and youth to achieve their full potential. Early childhood development includes services and initiatives to meet the diverse needs of children from birth up to six years of age. Child care services are designed to allow families to choose from a range of available, affordable, safe, quality child care options that meet their diverse needs and support healthy child development. This core business area also includes developmental and support services for children and youth with special needs, such as services and funding for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder and early intervention services.
[2006/07: Budget: $531,548,000 and 275 FTEs]

3. Provincial Services

This core business area provides for the administration of specialized provincial services for children and youth, such as youth custody centres, treatment programs for psychiatrically ill or conduct-disordered adolescents, services for the deaf and hard of hearing, and migrant services. This area is also responsible for the planning and monitoring of the Child and Youth Mental Health Plan. [2006/07: Budget: $54,272,000 and 621 FTEs]

4. Executive and Support Services

This core business area provides overall advice, direction, leadership and support to ministry programs. This includes overarching policy and legislative support, intergovernmental

relations, audit, staff development, performance management and related research functions, administrative and financial support and guidance. [2006/07: Budget: $20,869,000 and 227 FTEs]

Community Living Services

In addition to overall responsibility for the ministry, the Minister is responsible for supporting Community Living British Columbia (CLBC) to achieve its mandate to provide and improve upon services to adults and children with developmental disabilities. Resource allocations for 2006/07 include:

- **Ministry Services — Community Living**
  Funding for the Office of the Advocate for Service Quality and general support and advice to the Minister regarding CLBC-related responsibilities.
- **Transfers to Community Living British Columbia**
  Funding transfers to CLBC for the governance, management, operations and delivery of services and supports to adults and children with developmental disabilities.

Further Ministry Information:

Further information regarding ministry services, locations and related legislation is available on the ministry website at: http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/about_us/index.htm.

Resource Summary

Core Business Areas	2005/06 Restated Estimates[1]	2006/07 Estimates	2007/08 Plan	2008/09 Plan
Operating Expenses ($000)				
Ministry Operations Vote				
Child and Family Development[2]	568,998	627,337	669,047	687,123
Early Childhood Development, Child Care and Supports to Children with Special Needs[2,3]	419,221	531,548	549,374	552,826
Provincial Services	53,717	54,272	54,842	54,862
Executive and Support Services	18,648	20,869	21,737	22,097
Total Ministry Operations	**1,060,584**	**1,234,026**	**1,295,000**	**1,316,908**
Community Living Services Vote				
Ministry Services — Community Living[4]	181,334	659	659	659
Transfers to Community Living British Columbia[5]	394,802	601,610	612,911	623,911
Total Community Living Services	**576,136**	**602,269**	**613,570**	**624,570**
Total Ministry	**1,636,720**	**1,836,295**	**1,908,570**	**1,941,478**
Full-time Equivalents (FTEs)				
Ministry Operations Vote				
Child and Family Development[2]	2,696	2,939	2,804	1,256
Early Childhood Development, Child Care and Supports to Children with Special Needs[2,3]	262	275	270	214
Provincial Services	621	621	621	621
Executive and Support Services	205	227	234	238
Total Ministry Operations	**3,784**	**4,062**	**3,929**	**2,329**
Community Living Services Vote				
Ministry Services — Community Living[4]	168	5	5	5
Transfers to Community Living British Columbia[5]	0	0	0	0
Total Community Living Services	**168**	**5**	**5**	**5**
Total Ministry	**3,952**	**4,067**	**3,934**	**2,334**

Core Business Areas	2005/06 Restated Estimates[1]	2006/07 Estimates	2007/08 Plan	2008/09 Plan
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) ($000)				
Ministry Operations Vote				
Executive and Support Services	17,022	26,282	19,517	13,853
Total Ministry Operations	17,022	26,282	19,517	13,853
Capital Plan ($000)				
Ministry Operations Vote				
Child and Family Development	625	625	625	675
Early Childhood Development, Child Care and Supports to Children with Special Needs	0	0	0	0
Provincial Services	1,225	14,642	4,337	13,702
Executive and Support Services	0	0	0	0
Total Ministry Operations	1,850	15,267	4,962	14,377
Community Living Services Vote	498	5,030	1,880	630
Totals	2,348	20,297	6,842	15,007
Other Financing Transactions ($000)				
Executive and Support Services — Human Services Providers Financing Program				
Receipts	148	36	34	34
Disbursements	0	0	0	0
Net Cash Source (Requirements)	148	36	34	34

NOTES:

[1] These amounts have been restated, for comparative purposes only, to be consistent with the presentation of the *Estimates* 2006/07. Schedule A of the *Estimates* 2006/07, presents a detailed reconciliation.

[2] Based on readiness, the ministry will transfer the authority and responsibility for provision of service to authorities, where government retains the responsibility for funding, performance agreements, assessing accountabilities and monitoring. The authorities will be responsible for directing operations, enforcing standards, and managing funds and services. The regional authorities will be established incrementally based on readiness. The FTEs have been adjusted to reflect the proposed transfer of FTEs to the regional authorities. The number of actual FTEs transferred will depend on the timing of the transfer.

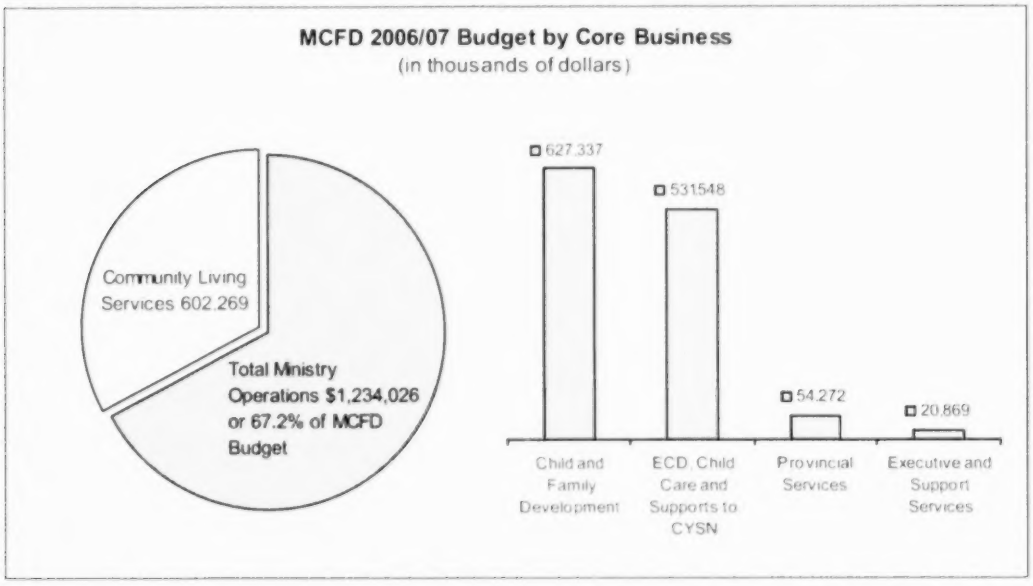
[3] Planning targets reflect new funding available under the 2005/06 – 2009/10 Early Learning and Child Care Bilateral Agreement-in-Principle. Until further details are made available, the initial commitment to B.C. made by the previous federal government will continue to be included as part of the fiscal plan for 2007/08 and 2008/09.

[4] 2005/06 *Restated Estimates* reflect the addition of children services as per the Children's Agreement.

[5] The ministry transferred authority and responsibility to Community Living BC, effective July 1, 2005. The FTEs have been adjusted to reflect the transfer to this Crown agency effective July 1, 2005.

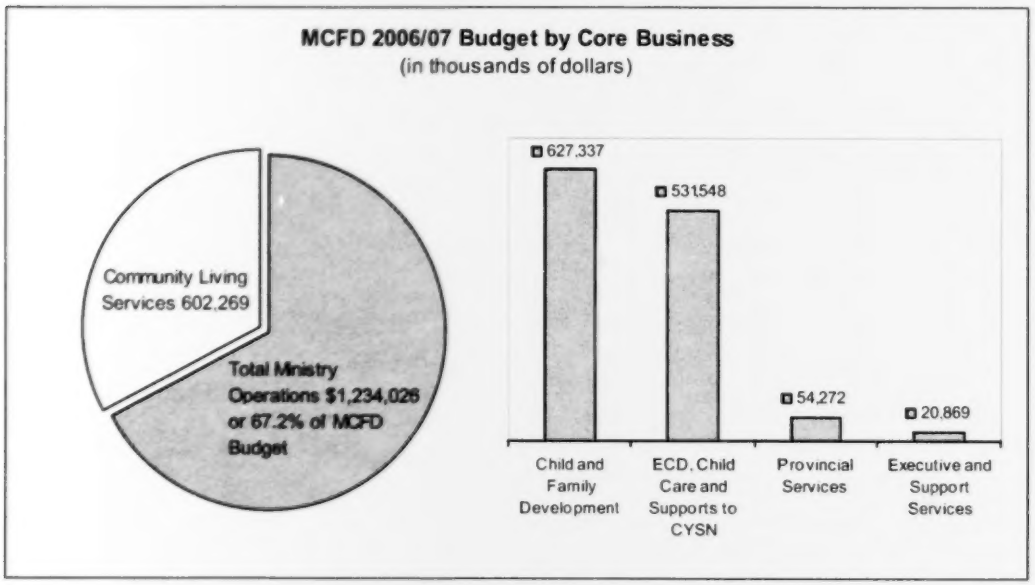
Ministry Budget

The following pie chart depicts the ministry's total budget, and allocations to Ministry Operations and Community Living Services. Ministry Operations is broken out in the accompanying chart to depict ministry services by core business area.



Ministry Budget

The following pie chart depicts the ministry's total budget, and allocations to Ministry Operations and Community Living Services. Ministry Operations is broken out in the accompanying chart to depict ministry services by core business area.



Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Results

Overview

Ministry Goals

This section presents the ministry's goals and outlines how specific objectives, strategies and performance measures are helping to achieve these goals. The ministry's goals focus on the long-term outcomes, relating to health, safety, and individual and community capacity, that we envision for B.C.'s children, youth, and their families. Brief descriptions of key initiatives and activities the ministry is undertaking to achieve its goals and objectives are provided. One of the ways that progress towards goals and objectives is tracked is through monitoring and reporting on performance measures. For each performance measure, baseline data are provided along with annual performance targets for the next three years.

Service plan goals, objectives, strategies and performance measures will continue to develop over time as the ministry's needs, resources and priorities change and as new and better performance information becomes available. The ministry evaluates its performance measures to ensure they are meaningful, reflect key ministry priorities and focus on the desired outcomes for the individuals receiving services. The ministry continues to collect, monitor and make available additional statistics[6] and reports on trends and outcomes associated with services provided to children, youth and families. For a full description and rationale of changes to the ministry's performance plan please refer to the annual Service Plan Reports[7] published at the end of June.

Linkage to the Five Great Goals

The ministry supports government's Five Great Goals for a Golden Decade:

1. To make British Columbia the best-educated, most literate jurisdiction on the continent.
2. To lead the way in North America in healthy living and physical fitness.
3. To build the best system of support in Canada for persons with disabilities, those with special needs, children at risk, and seniors.
4. To lead the world in sustainable environmental management, with the best air and water quality, and the best fisheries management, bar none.
5. To create more jobs per capita than anywhere else in Canada.

[6] http://www.gov.bc.ca/mcfd.

[7] http://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/annualreports/cfd/default.htm.

The ministry supports the Five Great Goals, with emphasis on the first three Great Goals, through its work in areas such as child protection, early childhood development, child and youth mental health, and child care, including services to children and youth with special needs.

Specifically, the ministry:

- contributes to Great Goal 1 through early childhood development and child care programming;
- contributes to Great Goal 2 through initiatives designed to promote healthy living for vulnerable children, the promotion of healthy living through child care centres, and programs for youth in community centres, such as life skills training;
- supports Great Goal 3 through:
  - — utilizing current best practice research to inform the delivery of child welfare services;
  - — implementing the Child and Youth Mental Health plan;
  - — participating in a cross ministry initiative for services to children and youth with special needs to deliver services in an integrated way to children and families; and
  - — implementing initiatives to assist youth at risk.
- is committed where possible to supporting Great Goals 4 and 5 through our programs and initiatives.

Cross Ministry Initiatives

Effective cross ministry partnerships are essential for the successful implementation of the initiatives directed at realizing government's Five Great Goals and overall strategic direction. The ministry:

- plays a key role in the development of StrongStartBC; a government plan that will bring together the initiatives of a number of ministries to work together to improve outcomes for B.C.'s children;
- partners with the Ministries of Health and Education on early childhood development programs and for the implementation of the Child and Youth Mental Health plan;
- is partnering with the Ministry of Education to support early learning opportunities designed to improve children's readiness to learn, including the Literacy initiative;
- is involved with the Ministries of Education and Health in the ongoing development of an integrated approach to services for children and youth with special needs, and is contributing to the development of a cross government disability strategy led by the Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance;
- is participating with other ministries in relation to youth Crystal Meth strategies;
- is working with Aboriginal communities to increase supports for vulnerable Aboriginal children and their families; and
- is working to support data sharing with other ministries and government organizations through Integrated Information Systems.

Performance Plan

Goal 1: *Vulnerable children and youth are healthy and safe in their families and communities.*

Maintained and improved safety and well-being of children and youth are principal outcomes the ministry works toward for vulnerable children and youth in B.C. The ministry remains current with national and international research on the most effective approaches concerning child welfare. Research and experience confirms that maintaining and improving the safety and well-being of children and youth is best achieved in the context of family and community. Research, including studies by G.Vaillant and E. Werner,[8] has shown that resilient high-risk children and youth usually have a close bond with an emotionally stable person, enabling them to receive sufficient nurturing and establish a sense of trust.

The primary responsibility for protecting and supporting the positive growth and development of children and youth rests with families. Ministry services work to enhance the resiliency of children, youth and families. This is addressed by working with communities, individuals and families to build their capacity to support positive outcomes for children. The child welfare system aims to ensure all children who come to the attention of the ministry have a safe and nurturing home. The ministry seeks a permanent family home for all children who would otherwise remain in the care of the ministry until they reach adulthood.

Research and consultation with Aboriginal communities indicates that a strong cultural component in services yields improvements in health and well-being for Aboriginal children, youth and families. The ministry is committed to increasing the cultural appropriateness of child and family services received by Aboriginal families.

The performance measure for Objective 1.1, concerning the rate of recurrence of neglect and/or abuse by family, will be used to directly measure the progress towards Goal 1. The other performance measures under Goal 1 assess progress toward the objectives, which in turn support this goal.

[8] Vaillant, G.E. (1993). *The wisdom of the ego.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Werner, E.E. (1995). Resilience in development. *Current Directions in Psychological Science.* 4 (3), 81–85.

Core Business Areas: *Child and Family Development, Provincial Services, Executive and Support Services.*

Objective 1.1: *A comprehensive and responsive child welfare system that supports families in keeping children safe.*

The ministry envisions a child welfare system that promotes safety, continuity and permanency. To support this direction, the ministry is providing more out-of-care options to keep children safe within their families and communities. "Out-of-care options" refer to alternative care arrangements with extended family or close friends for children at risk of neglect or abuse who are temporarily unable to live with their parents. Out-of-care options build on family and community strengths and maintain the continuity of family and community relationships, contributing to better outcomes for the children, youth and families served. The ministry also works with a child's extended family and others to develop a plan to keep the child safe, and to support the continuity of family and community relationships for the child.

Strategies

Key strategies include: supporting families to keep children at home safely; expanding planning options with families to provide increased opportunities for joint decision-making and increased involvement in care plans by family and community members; and increasing the use of non-court processes such as family conferencing, alternate dispute resolution and mediation to resolve child protection issues.

Performance Measure

Child safety is a ministry priority and a key element in the child welfare system. To ensure that children are safe in their communities and with their families, service delivery priorities include strengthening relationships between child welfare and community-based support services to increase early intervention and prevention activities. Priorities include implementing new options for responding to child protection reports that provide intensive support services as an alternative to investigations, as well as the assessment of strengths, needs, and risks for children and families.

The measure "Rate of recurrence of child neglect and/or abuse by family" describes the proportion of families who neglect and/or abuse their children within 12 months of a previously confirmed incidence of child neglect and/or abuse. For this measure, abuse is defined as physical, emotional or sexual abuse. Recurrence is measured over a set period of time and is potentially an indication of an ongoing problem which may signal the need for increased intervention services. This measure is directly linked to the outcome of ensuring child safety in the communities and with their families.

Targets

Monthly and fiscal trends, practice shifts, and the focus on reducing the neglect and abuse of children have been factored into establishing targets for this measure.

Performance Measure	2004/05 Baseline	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target	2008/09 Target
Rate of recurrence of child neglect and/or abuse by family.[1] [2]	16.9%	Forecast 16.6%	0.6% less than 2005/06 actual	0.7% less than 2006/07 actual	To be determined in 2006/07

[1] Data Source: the Management Information System (MIS) and the Social Worker Information System (SWS).

[2] This measure, baseline and targets are subject to change as per ongoing improvements in methodology, definitions, and the collection and interpretation of data.

Objective 1.2: *A comprehensive and responsive child welfare system that promotes permanency and stable, life-long attachments for children-in-care.*

When it is not possible for a child to live permanently with their parents or extended family, the ministry seeks a home for the child through adoption or other permanent out-of-care options. Relationships with the child's natural family — and, in the case of an Aboriginal child, the Aboriginal community — continue to be supported by the ministry.

Strategies

Key strategies include: helping children-in-care to develop and maintain permanent family and other life-long relationships; and increasing the use of options to enable extended family and others significant in a child's life, to care for children outside of foster care.

Performance Measures

One of the key elements of the child welfare system is placing children with people who know them and will maintain a life-long relationship with them and their families when they return to their parents. The first measure reflects the service delivery direction to move from ministry care arrangements to care arrangements that support and recognize the importance of maintaining the continuity of family and community relationships for children. The measure captures the use of the different options for keeping children out-of-care or for children leaving care through placements with kin or a person with significant ties to the child.

The key feature of permanency planning is seeking a permanent family home for all children who would otherwise remain in ministry care until they reach adulthood. This is a priority of the ministry, and between April 1, 2002 and March 31, 2005, 990 children-in-care of the ministry were placed into permanent homes. The number of adoptions of children who have been in the care of the ministry illustrates how many of these children now belong to a permanent family. The level of adoption activity has increased since June 2002.

As of March 31, 2005, there were an estimated 818 children registered for adoption with another 430 in the process of being registered. There were 292 families with approved home studies as of March 31, 2005. The measure "Per cent of children available for adoption who have been placed" indicates the number of children who are placed for adoption within a fiscal year as a percentage of all the children-in-care who are legally available for adoption and have a plan for adoption. In the fiscal year from April 1, 2004 to March 31, 2005, 308 children were placed for adoption.

Targets

The targets for the first measure were established based on forecasts, historic use and trends in intakes and admissions. The targets for the second measure were set with consideration to other strategies and initiatives in the ministry. As a result of other initiatives, such as reducing the overall numbers of children-in-care, there are smaller numbers of children each year for whom adoption will be an option. Targets for both measures were also based on consultations with MCFD regions based on practice experience.

Performance Measures	2004/05 Baseline	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target	2008/09 Target
Number of children placed with extended family or in community as an alternative to coming into care.[1]	668	675	700	740	775
Per cent of children with adoption plans who have been placed.[2]	18.7%	18%	19%	19%	20%

[1] Data Source: Management Information System (MIS) and the Social Worker Information System (SWS).

[2] Data Source: The Adoption Management System (AMS).

Objective 1.3: *An increasingly culturally appropriate service delivery system for Aboriginal children and families.*

In order to improve outcomes for Aboriginal children and families, the ministry is working to increase the cultural appropriateness of services provided to Aboriginal children and families in B.C. This includes services provided directly by the ministry and efforts to increase Aboriginal capacity for service delivery. As of December 31, 2005, 23 Aboriginal agencies have been delegated with the legal responsibility to provide a range of child and family services in their community. This strengthens community resources and makes culturally appropriate resources more accessible for Aboriginal children and their families. The ministry is also working with delegated Aboriginal agencies to increase the scope of services they provide. The ministry supports and consults with delegated Aboriginal agencies, assisting these agencies in meeting mandatory requirements under the *Child, Family and Community Service Act*. Regions are working to establish Aboriginal service teams and to contract with community-based Aboriginal agencies to deliver services to Aboriginal children and families.

Strategies

Key strategies include: developing new delegated Aboriginal agencies and expanding the scope of existing Aboriginal agencies; implementing initiatives to recruit and support Aboriginal foster and adoptive parents; increasing cultural awareness of ministry staff; hiring and retaining Aboriginal staff; and allocating funding from the Child and Youth Mental Health Plan for the development of specific Aboriginal child and youth mental health services.

Performance Measure

The ministry supports the development and expansion of delegated Aboriginal agencies in order to provide Aboriginal children and families with services that are more consistent with their culture. The per cent of Aboriginal children-in-care who receive services from delegated Aboriginal agencies is a measure of the proportion of children-in-care who are receiving culturally appropriate services.

Targets

The targets for the measure "Per cent of Aboriginal children-in-care who are served by delegated Aboriginal agencies" are based on the anticipated continuation of the success of strategies to safely transfer children-in-care of the ministry to delegated Aboriginal agencies.

Performance Measure	2004/05 Baseline	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target	2008/09 Target
Per cent of Aboriginal children-in-care who are served by delegated Aboriginal agencies.[1]	30.7%	33%	36%	39%	42%

[1] Data Source: The Management Information System (MIS) and the Social Worker Information System (SWS).

Objective 1.4: *Enhanced services for specific child and youth populations, such as youth in conflict with the law, children and youth at risk for or with mental disorders, and high-risk children and youth, such as those who are sexually exploited or homeless.*

The ministry is working to provide better services for specific child and youth populations, such as young offenders; children and youth at risk of, or suffering from, mental disorders; and children and youth who are sexually exploited. The ministry continues to enhance services to children and youth through implementation of the Child and Youth Mental Health Plan, in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education. MCFD has strengthened services for high-risk youth, including those who are sexually exploited through the provision of individualized services in response to a youth's need and through funding additional safe house/emergency shelter beds. The ministry continues to provide a broad range of community-based services for youth in conflict with the law.

Strategies

Key strategies include: continuing to use innovative, non-custodial approaches like community-based alternatives to custody for youth in conflict with the law; expanding community-based mental health treatment and support services; providing prevention, early intervention and other resources to schools to help children and youth manage anxiety and depression; and providing services for youth who are homeless and/or sexually exploited.

Performance Measure

Monitoring and reporting on the rate of youth in custody is a standard measure across Canada, allowing for inter-jurisdictional comparison, and indicates the use of one of the justice system's responses to youth crime. The measure is the annual average of the daily population of youth (aged 12 – 17 years) in custody per 10,000 as a proportion of all 12 – 17 year olds in B.C. The measure gauges the degree to which the youth correctional system relies on incarceration and indicates effectiveness of community-based alternatives to custody. The number of youth in the justice system is declining, demonstrating progress toward the desired outcome of reducing youth involvement in the criminal justice system and providing treatment services and community-based alternatives to custody, when appropriate. Currently, British Columbia has the lowest youth custody rate in Canada.

Targets

The targets are based on historical and demographic trends in British Columbia. Fluctuations in factors that affect youth custody rates, such as crime rates, account for the low baseline as compared to the targets. Although the overall numbers of youth in custody have declined, the needs profile of youth in custody has increased. Diverting youth with low needs and minor offences to community justice programs has left a greater concentration of youth in custody with high needs (e.g., Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders and mental health) and more serious offence histories.

Performance Measure	2004/05 Baseline	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target	2008/09 Target
Rate of youth in custody based on a proportion of all 12 – 17 year olds (per 10,000).[1]	4.8 per 10,000	Maximum 6 per 10,000	Maximum 6 per 10,000	Maximum 6 per 10,000	Maximum 6 per 10,000

[1] Data Source: The Management and Analysis Reporting System (MARS) and B.C. Stats.

Goal 2: *Children and youth, including those with special needs, are supported to achieve their full potential.*

Supporting children and youth, including those with special needs, to achieve their full potential is the ministry's second goal; the realization of which will contribute toward the

government's Great Goals that focus on literacy, healthy living, and support for children and youth at risk. The ministry recognizes that the quality of care that children receive in the early years is critical to their success in school and in life.

All stages in life are significant, but research confirms that the period from conception to school age is particularly crucial to the physical, intellectual, social and emotional development of a child. In Canada, significant differences in developmental status exist among children by the time they enter school. Seventy-five per cent of B.C.'s children enter school ready to learn, which means that one quarter of B.C. children are developmentally vulnerable when they enter school. Early childhood development, early learning and child care programs encourage healthy and optimal development of children and lead to better outcomes for individuals, families and communities. The ministry is committed to developing and supporting initiatives that will increase the capacity of families and communities to support early childhood development. Cross government partnerships and cooperation are key components of our commitment. By working with our ministry partners, including the Ministries of Education and Health, and with the support of families, communities and service providers, young children will have every opportunity to thrive.

The Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Bilateral Agreement-in-Principle with the federal government provides federal funding to enhance early learning and child care in British Columbia for children under the age of six. Our commitment is to initiate and enhance early learning and child care programs, in order to maximize children's growth and development and increase families' abilities to provide a safe, nurturing environment for their children. Our ministry and the Ministry of Education, in partnership with families, will continue to strengthen linkages between and among early learning, child care and early childhood development initiatives to improve school readiness and school performance.

The ministry supports a broad range of services that assist children with special needs to live as fully and independently as possible within their homes and communities. The ministry provides access to intervention and support services for children and youth with special needs and their families, which range from infant development programs to nursing support services. Children with special needs may require intensive, specific intervention, on a short-term, periodic or long-term basis. Services and supports are intended to promote healthy development, maximize quality of life and assist families in their role as primary caregivers. Families of children with special needs will have access to programs that are based on a family-centred approach and support parents' choice. Community Living BC is responsible for the provision of services to children with developmental disabilities, over age 6, except for children with continuing care orders, who remain the responsibility of MCFD.

A performance measure that will be used to directly assess the ministry's progress towards Goal 2 is: "Per cent of socio-economically disadvantaged children at age-appropriate grade level". The performance measure for Objective 2.1 concerning the per cent of children who enter kindergarten "ready to learn" will also be used to directly measure the progress

towards Goal 2. The other performance measures under Goal 2 assess progress toward the objectives, which in turn support this goal.

Performance Measure

This new measure, "Per cent of socio-economically disadvantaged children whose grade level matches their age," relates to the government's priority that disadvantaged children and children at risk have the best system of support. It represents the per cent of school-aged disadvantaged children at a grade level that matches their age as reported on September 30th of a school year. It measures how well socio-economically disadvantaged children are keeping up in school and is a good measure of whether the system of support for disadvantaged children is generating desired outcomes. By adopting this measure, B.C. is taking on a leadership role within Canada by reporting on whether disadvantaged children are attending school at the grade level that matches their age. Over the next ten years, B.C. will work towards eliminating the gap between socio-economically disadvantaged and other children.

Targets

Targets for the measure reflect the government's 10-year commitment to eliminate the gap between socio-economically disadvantaged and other children with respect to grade-level and children's age. Targets are set at a one per cent increase per year for the next 10 years; the baseline is 86 per cent in 2004/05.

Performance Measure	2004/05 Baseline	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target	2008/09 Target
Per cent of socio-economically disadvantaged children whose grade level matches their age.[1]	86% (95% for other children)	87%	88%	89%	90%

[1] Measures educational outcome inequality by socio-economic background. Socio-economically disadvantaged children are those that are in one or more of the following categories in the 12 month period October – September: Children-in-Care (MCFD); Children in out-of-care placements (MCFD); Children of Income Assistance recipients (MEIA); Children in the Home of a Relative (MEIA); Individuals with youth agreements (MCFD); and Children under supervision orders (MCFD).

Core Business Areas: *Early Childhood Development, Child Care and Supports to Children with Special Needs; Provincial Services and Executive and Support Services.*

Objective 2.1: *Increased family and community capacity to support early childhood development.*

The ministry is working in partnership with other ministries, including the Ministries of Health and Education, to plan and strengthen early childhood development services in B.C. Government is working to provide parents with the information they need about

early childhood development and to increase service choice and flexibility. Our ministry is collaborating with the Ministry of Education to plan an overall approach to early learning and child care. These efforts will support government's goal to make B.C. the best-educated, most literate jurisdiction on the continent. By making strategic investments in early childhood development, children will have the foundation skills to thrive and succeed in life. Government is partnering with the Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP),[9] an interdisciplinary research institute in early childhood development including four of B.C.'s universities: Simon Fraser University; University of British Columbia; University of Northern British Columbia; and the University of Victoria. The HELP database provides information for some of the ministry's performance measurement activities.

The ministry is committed to investing in community-based initiatives throughout the province that are supportive of the Five Great Goals and include a strong community investment focus. The enhancement of community resources through current initiatives like *Success by 6* and *Children First*[10] helps to build community capacity, supports sustainable community partnerships, and improves access to appropriate early childhood development services. In particular, the ministry is committed to providing and supporting initiatives and services that support the early childhood development needs of young Aboriginal children and families.

Strategies

Key strategies include: implementing, with ministry partners, a cross government strategy to support children under age six and their families to optimize early childhood development outcomes; building capacity within Aboriginal communities to deliver culturally appropriate services, and supporting Aboriginal communities to develop and implement early childhood development strategies to meet their needs.

Performance Measure

The measure "Per cent of children who enter kindergarten 'ready to learn'" relates to government and ministry priorities for early childhood development services that support children's readiness to learn using the Early Development Instrument (EDI). The EDI is an assessment tool of students' "readiness to learn" administered by teachers. Kindergarten teachers rate students on performance in five major domains: physical health, language/ cognitive skills, social competence, emotional maturity, and communication and general knowledge. Through the use of the EDI, this measure provides a comprehensive picture of the status of B.C. children's school readiness. Provincial baseline data from 2004/05 show that 75 per cent of kindergarten students are "ready to learn", however, this indicates that 25 per cent of B.C. kindergarten children are developmentally vulnerable when they enter school. Progress regarding this measure will be reported in the ministry's annual service plan report for 2007/08, as the provincial level assessment data for this measure is collected over a three-year period.

[9] For further information about HELP please see: http://www.earlylearning.ubc.ca.

[10] Please see: http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/early_childhood/index.htm.

Targets

The targets for this measure were selected based on an estimate of the impact of strategies intended to increase the integration and effective deilvery of programs, as well as the anticipated additional government resources for infant development and child care. Targets will be adjusted as more is learned about the impact of public resources on the 75 per cent baseline.

Performance Measure	2004/05 Baseline	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target	2008/09 Target
Per cent of children who enter kindergarten "ready to learn."[1]	75%	N/A (Data collected every three years)		78%	N/A

[1] Data Source: HELP http://ecdportal.help.ubc.ca/findedidata.htm.

Objective 2.2: *Families have access to quality child care.*

British Columbia is committed to giving children opportunities to be safe and secure; to be physically, mentally and emotionally healthy; and to be effective learners. B.C.'s vision is to help children become the best they can be physically, intellectually, socially and emotionally. Providing access to quality early learning and child care supports this vision. Accordingly, provincial child care investments will focus on meeting the needs of families and increasing the quality of child care. Research indicates that quality child care contributes to improved child development and increased school readiness.

Government is committed to supporting quality, sustainable and safe child care services so that parents may choose from a range of child care options that meet the diverse needs in their communities. Increasing child care resources and government support for child care helps to make child care more accessible and affordable for parents. The availability of child care is a key need of many families in B.C.

Strategies

Key strategies include: building additional child care spaces; moving to a more user-friendly and efficient electronic child care subsidy administration that is supported by new community outreach services available to parents; working with the Ministry of Education to strengthen linkages; and identifying opportunities for service improvements.

Performance Measures

The child care sector in British Columbia is complex and MCFD is one of many contributors to B.C.'s child care system. Providing a complete picture of B.C.'s child care sector through performance measure data is challenging: there are many informal child care arrangements, some providers choose not to participate in provincially funded programs, and the number of spaces approved for MCFD funding fluctuates according to the changing child care needs

of families, and time of year. Therefore, MCFD will be reporting on a number of child care measures in its service plan to provide a more complete picture of child care in B.C. These measures include:

1. "Number of Licensed spaces approved for CCOF funding."

Child care capacity and supply are measured by the total number of Child Care Operating Funding (CCOF) approved spaces. This measure will be calculated in two different ways: the cumulative total number of spaces and the average monthly number of spaces. The average measure is a new measure in the service plan and represents the average number of licensed child care spaces the ministry commits to fund each month under CCOF.

2. "Number of new licensed child care spaces funded under the Capital Funding Program."

This new measure counts the number of new spaces created each year by major capital projects funded under the Child Care Capital Funding Program and will reflect the impacts of new federal child care funding.

3. "Number of children whose families receive a child care subsidy."

Child care subsidies assist low and moderate income families with the cost of child care so they may pursue employment, education or other community activities, such as volunteering. Subsidies also support early childhood development by assisting families in accessing quality child care. This measure counts the average number of children whose families receive a child care subsidy per month. The number of subsidies in any given year depends on the number of families that apply. Currently, all eligible families who apply for child care subsidies receive funding. In 2005/06 it is anticipated that an average of 22,000 children's families in B.C. will receive child care subsidy each month. As of December 2005, the families of a total of 41,693 children have received child care subsidies in 2005/06. Of those, 12,396 (approximately 30 per cent) were new to the child care subsidy program.

Targets

Performance measure targets reflect new funding available under the 2005/06 - 2009/10 Early Learning and Child Care Bilateral Agreement-in-Principle. Figures for 2005/06 have been revised as shown below, due to the implementation of an improved methodology to assess and set child care targets and more accurate information from a new information Datamart system. The total number of licensed spaces approved for CCOF funding in 2005/06 is forecast at 79,000. The 2005/06 - 2007/08 Service Plan Update September 2005 identified a target of 85,000.

The child care subsidy targets reflect the expected uptake of the subsidy program. The new system eliminates double counting of children receiving child care services that was inherent in the previous information system, and arrives at a more accurate count of children whose

families receive child care subsidies. The refinements in the information system have resulted in a revised baseline and targets, including a restated target of 22,000 for 2005/06.

Performance Measures		2004/05 Baseline	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target[5]	2007/08 Target	2008/09 Target
Number of licensed spaces approved for CCOF funding.[1,2]	a) Total	76,440	85,000 (forecast 79,000)	84,000	89,000	TBD
	b) Average	68,360	72,000	77,000	81,000	TBD
Number of new licensed child care spaces funded under the Capital Funding Program.[3]		518	2,000	3,000	3,000	TBD
Number of children whose families receive a child care subsidy.[4]		21,704	22,000 (restated from 27,500)	24,000	28,000	TBD

[1] The CCOF measure may be assessed and/or changed in the next service plan to more accurately reflect government's support for regulated child care providers. The baseline and targets are subject to change due to ongoing improvements to the data reporting systems.

[2] Data Source: CCOF Datamart System.

[3] Data Source: Capital Funding Program Statistics, MCFD.

[4] Data Source: MCFD Historical Datamart System for Subsidy.

[5] Targets reflect funding consistent with the 2005/06 – 2009/10 ELCC Bilateral Agreement-in-Principle.

Objective 2.3: *Increased access to early intervention and support services to assist families caring for children and youth with special needs.*

The ministry provides a range of intervention and support services for children and youth with special needs and their families. Over the next two years, MCFD will commit new resources to increase access and reduce waiting times for infant development programs, early intervention therapies, school-aged therapies, supported child development and respite services. New investments will also improve services for children with complex health needs, children with sensory impairments and children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) and other complex developmental behavioural conditions. The ministry is working collaboratively with the Ministries of Health and Education to improve the integration of services in B.C. for families of children and youth with special needs, including children with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Strategies

Key strategies include: new investments in key intervention and support programs; development of new evidence-based services; development and implementation of retention and recruitment strategies for paediatric therapists and interventionists; and improved cross government planning and co-ordination of provincial and community-based services.

Performance Measures

Children with special needs receive significant benefits from early intervention services that promote physical, cognitive, social, emotional and communication skill development. An important component of the ministry's services to children with special needs is early intervention therapies: speech/language therapy, occupational therapy, and physiotherapy. Monitoring the time from when a family requests a therapy service to when they begin receiving an early intervention therapy service will help the ministry to measure access to these services.

Supported Child Development (SCD) Services are provided to children with special needs to assist them in participating in community and child care settings. There are two components to SCD: a consultation service and extra staff supports. Monitoring the time from a request when an individual support plan is completed to when a child begins receiving extra staff supports, will help the ministry to assess how well we serve families and to determine how best to distribute resources.

Targets

The baseline and targets for early intervention therapy were set based on data from January 2005 to March 2005. For the supported child development measure, data system development, collection, analysis and methodology is currently in progress. Data from all 5 regions will be available by the end of fiscal 2005/06, in order to establish the baseline for this measure. Targets will be established, taking into consideration historical trends and factors such as human resources availability; practice standards; the availability and cost of spaces, and the demand for the program as determined by population changes and increased awareness of the SCD program. This information will be reported online at www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/early_childhood/index.htm and in the ministry's 2006/07 Annual Service Plan Report.

Performance Measures		2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target	2008/09 Target
Per cent of children with special needs under age six and their families who receive an early intervention therapy or supported child development services within three months of service request. [1,2,3]	Early Intervention Therapy	34%	5% over baseline	10% over baseline	TBD
	Supported Child Development	Baseline and targets to be developed based on data collected in 2005/06			

[1] Supported child development services and early intervention therapies are reported separately. The same children may be waiting for both services at a given time. In addition, this measure is subject to change due to ongoing refinements in service delivery definitions and the methods information is captured and measured.

[2] Data Source: Sample survey and regional reporting.

[3] Wait time is defined differently for EIT and SCD. For EIT, wait time refers to the time from when a family requests a therapy service to when they begin receiving an EIT service. For SCD, wait time represents the time from when an individual support plan is completed to when a child begins receiving extra staff supports.

Goal 3: *Children, youth, and their families are served by accountable and responsive community-based service delivery systems.*

The ministry believes children, youth, and their families are best served through a community-based service delivery system. The ministry is committed to the development of authorities that will facilitate decision-making regarding services, closer to those who use them. Safety, service quality and accountability are paramount considerations in developing effective, efficient service delivery systems.

The ministry is working in partnership with Aboriginal communities to establish regional Aboriginal child and family development authorities that will take over responsibility for services to Aboriginal children and families. This partnership with Aboriginal communities is based on existing relationships and on new approaches to build effective working relationships.

The ministry continues to make improvements in increasing the effectiveness, efficiency and quality of services and service systems. This includes improving contract management and financial practices with service providers. This work requires strong partnerships and collaborative relationships with the ministry's stakeholders and community partners to achieve the ministry's goals and objectives. The ministry will continue to focus on improving the ministry's project management and monitoring and accountability systems, including quality assurance mechanisms such as accreditation, audits and reviews.

Core Business Areas: ***Child and Family Development; Early Childhood Development, Child Care and Supports to Children with Special Needs; Provincial Services; and Executive and Support Services.***

Objective 3.1: *Community-based governance structures are supported.*

The ministry is continuing to pursue the creation of regional Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal child and family development authorities for the delivery of MCFD services. These authorities, once established, will be accountable for the quality and effectiveness of services and the management of public funds. These authorities' responsibilities to individuals receiving services, and to their broader communities, will be addressed as part of their accountability requirements.

Strategies

Key strategies include: development of enabling legislation; focussing on the implementation of a plan jointly developed by Aboriginal communities and the ministry, to establish regional Aboriginal child and family development authorities, including a phased-in plan for the transfer of responsibility consistent with readiness and capacity. The ministry, at the same time, plans to work on the development of non-Aboriginal child and family development authorities.

Performance Measure

The establishment of the regional Aboriginal child and family development authorities is expected to occur in 2006/07, followed by the regional authorities for non-Aboriginal child and family services in 2007/08. The authorities will assume responsibility under legislation for the delivery of services over time.

Targets

There are five MCFD regions in B.C., therefore the targets represent the establishment of both an Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal child and family development authority in each region.

Performance Measure	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target	2008/09 Target
Number of new regional child and family development authorities established that assume responsibility for delivery of ministry services.[1]	0	5 regional Aboriginal child and family development authorities	5 regional child and family development authorities	Status quo

[1] Data Source: N/A.

Objective 3.2: *Accountable and quality contracted services.*

Seventy-five per cent of ministry services are delivered through contracted services. The ministry seeks to improve the accountability of these contracted services in order to encourage socially and fiscally responsible management of community-based social services. The ministry is implementing performance-based contracts with contracted agencies and community organizations to improve service quality and ensure the most effective use of available resources.

As part of the ministry's quality assurance activities, the ministry requires that all ministry contractors that provide services to the public and have total annual contracts of $500,000 or more achieve third party accreditation by September 2006. The ministry will also support contractors that receive less than $500,000 in annual funding in the accreditation process.

Accreditation ensures that agencies have conformed to a set of best practice standards developed by consumers, clients, stakeholders and international organizations. Accreditation standards require the development of an outcome measurement system that collects feedback and evaluates satisfaction of persons served, the family of persons served and stakeholders. The outcome measurement system ensures that planning decisions are made on evidence of client satisfaction, efficiency, effectiveness and access to services.

Strategies

Key strategies include: implementing improvements to strengthen contracts; implementing enhancements to contract information systems and tools; providing accreditation training, support and advice to contractors to assist them in achieving and maintaining accreditation; and expanding the network of agency mentors to assist other agencies in the accreditation process.

Performance Measure

The performance measure "Per cent of agencies, that are required to be accredited, that achieve accreditation" assesses the proportion of agencies who achieve accreditation as a percentage of those who are required to be accredited. As of January 31, 2006, 220 agencies are required to achieve accreditation prior to September 2006 and an additional 40 are participating voluntarily in the accreditation process.

Targets

The targets were selected based on the required timeframes and the contractors' feedback as well as the desired outcome of all required contracted agencies achieving accreditation by 2007/08.

Performance Measure	2004/05 Baseline	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target	2008/09 Target
Per cent of agencies, that are required to be accredited, that achieve accreditation.	39%	70%	100%	100%	100%

Data Source: Accreditation database and reporting from agencies.

Ministry Performance Plan Summary

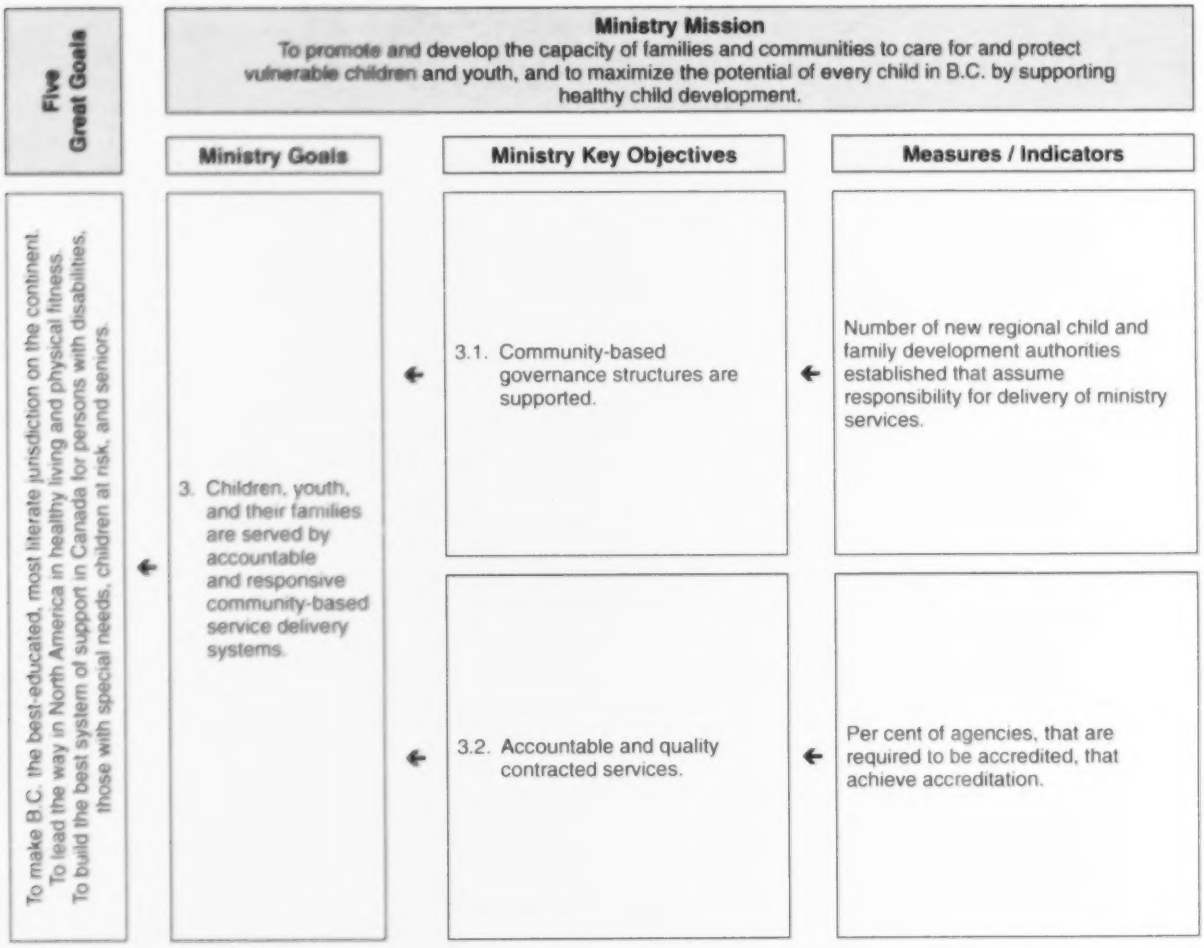
Five Great Goals

To make B.C. the best-educated, most literate jurisdiction on the continent.
To lead the way in North America in healthy living and physical fitness.
To build the best system of support in Canada for persons with disabilities, those with special needs, children at risk, and seniors.

Ministry Mission

To promote and develop the capacity of families and communities to care for and protect vulnerable children and youth, and to maximize the potential of every child in B.C. by supporting healthy child development.

Ministry Goals	Ministry Key Objectives	Measures / Indicators
* Goal and objective level performance measure 1. Vulnerable children and youth are healthy and safe in their families and communities.	1.1. A comprehensive and responsive child welfare system that supports families in keeping children safe.	* Rate of recurrence of child neglect and/or abuse by family.
	1.2. A comprehensive and responsive child welfare system that promotes permanency and stable, life-long attachments for children-in-care.	Number of children placed with extended family or in community as an alternative to coming into care. Per cent of children with adoption plans who have been placed.
	1.3. An increasingly culturally appropriate service delivery system for Aboriginal children and families.	Per cent of Aboriginal children-in-care who are served by delegated Aboriginal agencies.
	1.4. Enhanced services for specific child and youth populations, such as youth in conflict with the law, children and youth at risk for or with mental disorders, and high-risk children and youth, such as those who are sexually exploited or homeless.	Rate of youth in custody based on a proportion of all 12 – 17 year olds (per 10,000).
* Goal and objective level performance measure 2. Children and youth, including those with special needs, are supported to achieve their full potential. **Goal level measure:** Per cent of socio-economically disadvantaged children whose grade level matches their age.	2.1. Increased family and community capacity to support early childhood development.	* Per cent of children who enter kindergarten "ready to learn".
	2.2. Families have access to quality child care.	Number of licensed spaces approved for CCOF funding. Number of new licensed child care spaces created under the Capital Funding Program. Number of children whose families receive a child care subsidy.
	2.3. Increased access to early intervention and support services to assist families caring for children and youth with special needs.	Per cent of children with special needs under age six and their families who receive an early intervention therapy or supported child development services within three months of service request.


Five Great Goals
Ministry Mission
To promote and develop the capacity of families and communities to care for and protect vulnerable children and youth, and to maximize the potential of every child in B.C. by supporting healthy child development.
Ministry Goals
Ministry Key Objectives
Measures / Indicators
To make B.C. the best-educated, most literate jurisdiction on the continent.
To lead the way in North America in healthy living and physical fitness.
To build the best system of support in Canada for persons with disabilities, those with special needs, children at risk, and seniors.
3. Children, youth, and their families are served by accountable and responsive community-based service delivery systems.
3.1. Community-based governance structures are supported.
Number of new regional child and family development authorities established that assume responsibility for delivery of ministry services.
3.2. Accountable and quality contracted services.
Per cent of agencies, that are required to be accredited, that achieve accreditation.

Ministry Performance Plan Summary

Five Great Goals

To make B.C. the best-educated, most literate jurisdiction on the continent.
To lead the way in North America in healthy living and physical fitness.
To build the best system of support in Canada for persons with disabilities, those with special needs, children at risk, and seniors.

Ministry Mission

To promote and develop the capacity of families and communities to care for and protect vulnerable children and youth, and to maximize the potential of every child in B.C. by supporting healthy child development.

Ministry Goals	Ministry Key Objectives	Measures / Indicators
* Goal and objective level performance measure 1. Vulnerable children and youth are healthy and safe in their families and communities.	1.1. A comprehensive and responsive child welfare system that supports families in keeping children safe.	* Rate of recurrence of child neglect and/or abuse by family.
	1.2. A comprehensive and responsive child welfare system that promotes permanency and stable, life-long attachments for children-in-care.	Number of children placed with extended family or in community as an alternative to coming into care. Per cent of children with adoption plans who have been placed.
	1.3. An increasingly culturally appropriate service delivery system for Aboriginal children and families.	Per cent of Aboriginal children-in-care who are served by delegated Aboriginal agencies.
	1.4. Enhanced services for specific child and youth populations, such as youth in conflict with the law, children and youth at risk for or with mental disorders, and high-risk children and youth, such as those who are sexually exploited or homeless.	Rate of youth in custody based on a proportion of all 12 – 17 year olds (per 10,000).
* Goal and objective level performance measure 2. Children and youth, including those with special needs, are supported to achieve their full potential. **Goal level measure:** Per cent of socio-economically disadvantaged children whose grade level matches their age.	2.1. Increased family and community capacity to support early childhood development.	* Per cent of children who enter kindergarten "ready to learn".
	2.2. Families have access to quality child care.	Number of licensed spaces approved for CCOF funding. Number of new licensed child care spaces created under the Capital Funding Program. Number of children whose families receive a child care subsidy.
	2.3. Increased access to early intervention and support services to assist families caring for children and youth with special needs.	Per cent of children with special needs under age six and their families who receive an early intervention therapy or supported child development services within three months of service request.

Five Great Goals	Ministry Goals	Ministry Key Objectives	Measures / Indicators
To make B.C. the best-educated, most literate jurisdiction on the continent. To lead the way in North America in healthy living and physical fitness. To build the best system of support in Canada for persons with disabilities, those with special needs, children at risk, and seniors.	3. Children, youth, and their families are served by accountable and responsive community-based service delivery systems.	3.1. Community-based governance structures are supported.	Number of new regional child and family development authorities established that assume responsibility for delivery of ministry services.
		3.2. Accountable and quality contracted services.	Per cent of agencies, that are required to be accredited, that achieve accreditation.

Ministry Mission
To promote and develop the capacity of families and communities to care for and protect vulnerable children and youth, and to maximize the potential of every child in B.C. by supporting healthy child development.

Related Initiatives and Planning Processes

Regulatory Reform

In the three years ending in June 2004, the ministry reduced its regulatory burden by 53 per cent. This accomplishment exceeded government's commitment to reduce government regulatory requirements by one-third, as well as the ministry's 40 per cent reduction target.

The ministry will support Government's Regulatory Reform initiatives by committing to controlling regulatory burden and improving regulatory quality by:

- Identifying at least one regulatory reform opportunity that will shift the ministry's regulations to be more citizen-centred, cost-effective, results-based, and responsive to our clients by reducing and/or streamlining the steps or business processes involved in complying with ministry regulations; and
- Adhering to the regulatory criteria set out in the Regulatory Reform Policy, and targeting a zero per cent net increase in regulation through 2008/09.

Information Resources Management Plan

The ministry's Information Resource Management Plan overview is available on the ministry website at: http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/about_us/service_plan.htm.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Information to Note

About Us

For online information about the ministry visit:
http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/about_us/index.htm.

Key Contact Information

For telephone numbers and addresses of ministry offices see the provincial government blue pages of a telephone book, or view the information online:
http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/regions/index.htm. The mailing address for the Ministry of Children and Family Development is: PO Box 9721 Stn Prov Govt Victoria, B.C. V8W 9S2.

Helpline for Children in British Columbia

Phone **310-1234**, free from anywhere in the province anytime; to use the telephone device for the deaf, dial **1 866 660-0505.** The Helpline for Children provides round-the-clock access to professionals to respond to concerns that a child under the age of 19 years may be abused. Abuse can be abandonment, desertion, neglect, ill-treatment or failure to meet physical, emotional or medical needs. Calls can be anonymous — and abuse can be stopped. For online information visit:
http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/child_protection/reporting_child_abuse.htm.

Adoption Site — for information on adopting one of B.C.'s waiting children

For information on adopting a child, phone toll-free in B.C.: **1 877 ADOPT 07 (1 877 236-7807)** or phone a nearby ministry office. Hundreds of children in the permanent care of the ministry are waiting to be adopted into permanent, loving families. Applicants do not need to be married, wealthy or a certain age to adopt a waiting child. Please phone today for information or visit: http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/adoption/index.htm.

Be a Foster Parent — B.C.'s foster parents make a positive difference for vulnerable children in need

For information, phone the B.C. Federation of Foster Parent Associations' Fosterline at **1 800 663-9999** (outside B.C. phone **1 604 660-7696**) or the Federation of Aboriginal Foster Parents toll-free at **1 866 291-7091.** For online information visit:
http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/foster/index.html.

Child Care B.C. Helpline — for information on child care

For information and referrals for B.C. child care programs and services for parents and child care providers phone **1 888 338-6622.** For online information visit: http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/.

Autism Site — for information for parents on Autism Spectrum Disorders

For online information visit: http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/index.htm.

Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP) Site — for information on early childhood development research

For information on the Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP) an interdisciplinary research partnership related to early child development visit: http://www.earlylearning.ubc.ca/.

Appendix 2: Glossary of Terms

ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION (ADR): an option for resolving family differences instead of going through the court system. Examples include family group conferencing and mediation.

CHILD AND YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH: refers to children and youth with mental disorders that interfere significantly with daily functioning, such as anxiety disorder, conduct disorder, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, any depressive disorder, substance abuse, pervasive development disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, schizophrenia, Tourette's disorder, any eating disorder and bipolar disorder.

CHILD CARE: refers to the care and supervision of a child in a child care setting, other than: a) by the child's parent; or, b) while the child is attending an educational program provided under the *School Act* or the *Independent School Act*.

- **LICENSED CHILD CARE:** refers to child care spaces that are licensed under the Child Care Licensing Regulations of the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act*. It includes any group or family child care provider licensed in B.C. These regulations govern safety and health factors and the factors related to the delivery of child care, including: the qualifications of the caregiver; the group size; and the ratio of qualified caregivers to the number of children that are permitted. The Ministry of Health is responsible for licensing child care facilities.
- **LICENCE-NOT-REQUIRED CHILD CARE:** child care providers that provide care to less than three children are not required to have a licence and are not subject to qualifications or standards for education as set out in the regulations of the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act*. These providers are encouraged, but not required, to register with the Child Care Resource and Referral program. Registration means that these caregivers have met a number of important requirements including: criminal record checks; character references; a home-setting review; a physician's report on their physical and emotional capacity to care for children; and first aid training.
- **REGULATED CHILD CARE:** refers to programs that meet safety and health standards that are established and monitored by provincial governments. It includes both licensed child care that is monitored by the Ministry of Health licensing officers and licence-not-required child care that is registered with the Child Care Resource and Referral program.

CHILD-IN-CARE or CHILDREN-IN-CARE: refers to any child under 19 years of age in the care of the Director under the *Child, Family and Community Service Act*.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS: children with special needs have significant impairments in one or more of the following areas: health, cognition, behavioural, communication, sensory motor, social/emotional/behavioural or self-help (adaptive), and require specialized supports to enhance or improve their health, development or participation in daily activities at home, school and in their communities.

DELEGATED ABORIGINAL AGENCIES: refers to Aboriginal agencies with delegated child welfare authority under the *Child, Family and Community Service Act*.

FAMILY DEVELOPMENT RESPONSE (FDR): an alternative to child protection investigations that focuses on parental involvement, assessing a family's strengths and risks, and providing services as required by the child and family. These may include parenting programs, anger management, counselling, mental health and other services.

HIGH-RISK YOUTH: refers to youth aged 16 to 18 who experience significant and often multiple challenges in their transition to adulthood such as sexual exploitation, alcohol and drug misuse, living on the street, and mental health problems.

KITH AND KIN AGREEMENT: a written agreement between a social worker and a child's extended family member or other person known to the child, to care for and financially support the child's living arrangement. The child is not under government care and the parent remains the legal guardian. The parent agrees to this arrangement and is involved in the child's care plan.

MENTAL ILLNESS and MENTAL DISORDER: used interchangeably to mean any emotional, behavioural, or brain-related condition that causes significant impairment in functioning as defined in standard diagnostic protocols.

OUT-OF-CARE OPTIONS: options, including kith and kin agreements, that can be utilized either to prevent a child coming into the child welfare foster care system, or to leave the foster care system to be cared for by someone other than the parent.

REGIONAL ABORIGINAL CHILD AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITIES: authorities that have the responsibility for the governance and delivery of regional services to Aboriginal children and families.

SEXUALLY EXPLOITED YOUTH: refers to a person under the age of 19 who has been manipulated or forced to engage in sexual activity in exchange for money, drugs, food, shelter or other considerations.

SUPPORTED CHILD DEVELOPMENT: a range of consulting and support services that support children with special needs to participate in inclusive community child care settings, including preschool.

YOUTH IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW: refers to a person who, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, appears to be twelve years old or older, but less than eighteen years old, who is charged under the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*, with having committed an offence while he or she was a young person, or who was found guilty of an offence under this Act.